



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 6

1445 ROSS AVENUE, SUITE 1200

DALLAS, TX 75202-2733

NOV - 7 2011

Secretary-Designate John H. Bemis
New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department
1220 South St. Francis Drive
Santa Fe, NM 87505

Dear Secretary-Designate Bemis:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is writing to formally inform you the EPA is attempting to negotiate an Administrative Settlement Agreement and Order on Consent (AOC) with Hecla Limited (Hecla) for a removal action at the Johnny M Mine Area Superfund Site near San Mateo, McKinley County, New Mexico. Throughout the process, we will continue our ongoing discussions with your staff regarding this and related matters. Moreover, we greatly appreciate the contributions your team has already made to this effort.

The EPA intends to transmit to Hecla a proposed AOC within a matter of days and will require a response from Hecla by November 30, 2011, indicating whether Hecla is interested in conducting a removal under an AOC. If the EPA and Hecla are unable to reach an agreement by January 6, 2012, the EPA will evaluate other options.

If you have any comments or questions concerning the proposed AOC, please contact me or have your staff contact Pamela Travis at (214) 655-8056, Senior Assistant Regional Counsel or Jessica Hernandez, Assistant Regional Counsel at (214) 665-8384.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Samuel Coleman".

Samuel Coleman, P.E.

Director

Superfund Division

cc: Holland Shepherd, Program Manager
Mining Act Reclamation Program



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